

Stormwater Pollution – It's Up to Us

The City of Torrance has two drainage systems - the sewers and the storm drains. The storm drain system was designed to prevent flooding by carrying excess rainwater away from city streets out to the ocean.

During storms in urban areas, rainwater may mix with pollutants in industrial and household runoff, creating storm water pollution.

Most runoff from the streets of Torrance discharges directly to the Pacific Ocean via the storm drain system. Activities from landscaping, gardening and pest control can be major sources of storm water pollution, including pollutants that are of primary concern. These include trash from improper waste disposal, nutrients and bacteria from food wastes and landscape maintenance, and oil from vehicle fluids leaked on parking lots.

Look for curbside catch basins and other storm drain inlets in and near the workplace. These should be labeled with stencils that say "NO DUMPING: DRAINS TO OCEAN". All of us need to make sure that only clean storm drain water runoff is allowed to enter these inlets.



PROBLEMS

Landscaping and garden maintenance activities can be major contributors to ocean pollution. Soils, yard wastes, overwatering and garden chemicals become part of the urban runoff mix that winds its way through streets, gutters and storm drains before entering the ocean.

Poorly functioning sprinklers and overwatering, for example, waste water and increase the number of pollutants flowing into storm drains.

Fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides are washed off lawns and landscaped areas. These chemicals not only kill garden invaders. They also harm useful insects, poison fish and contaminate ground and ocean water.

Leaves, grass clippings and tree trimmings that are swept or blown into the street and gutter are also ocean pollutants. These wastes clog catch basins, increasing the risk of flooding on your street, and carry garden chemicals into the ocean. As they decompose, they also absorb oxygen fish need to survive.



SOLUTIONS

Best Management Practices that include the proper handling, storage and disposal of materials can prevent pollutants from entering the ocean through the storm drain system.

1 • General Landscaping Tips

- Protect stockpiles and materials from wind and rain by storing them under tarps or secured plastic sheeting.
- Schedule grading and excavation projects for dry weather.
- Sweep up dry spills immediately and dispose of the material in the trash.
- Prevent erosion by planting fast-growing annual and perennial grasses. These will shield and bind the soil.



2 • Garden & Lawn Maintenance

- Do not overwater. Conserve water by using irrigation practices such as drip irrigation, soaker hoses or micro-spray systems.
- Place all landscaping waste in approved green waste containers for pickup and composting.
- Do not blow or rake leaves into the street, gutter, parkways, or storm drains.
- Use organic or non-toxic fertilizers.
- Do not over fertilize and do not fertilize near storm drain inlets or near paved areas that may carry runoff to storm drain inlets.
- Store pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals in a covered area to prevent runoff.



3 • Pesticide Alternatives

The "chemicals-only" approach to pest control is only a temporary fix.

A more common-sense approach is needed for a long-term solution. It is called **Integrated Pest Management** (IPM).

Plan your IPM strategy in this order:

A) Physical Controls

- Caulking holes
- Barriers
- Traps
- Hand picking



B) Insect Controls

- Predatory insects (e.g. Green lacewings eat aphids)
- Bacterial insecticides (e.g. Bacillus thuringiensis kills caterpillars)

C) Chemical Controls - Your Last Resort

Use these least-toxic products:

- Dehydrating dusts (e.g. silica gel)
- Insecticidal soaps
- Boric acid powder
- Pyrethrin-based insecticides
- Horticultural oils

Safe Substitutes for Pest Control

Garden Aphids & Mites - Mix 1 tablespoon of liquid soap and 1 cup vegetable oil. Add 1 teaspoon of this mixture to a cup of water and spray.

Caterpillars - Products containing Bacillus thuringiensis.

Ants - Boric acid powder or hydramethynon baits.

Roaches - Boric acid powder.

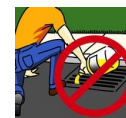
4 • If You Must Use Pesticides

- **Use a pesticide that is specifically designed to control your pest.** The insect should be listed on the label. Approximately 90% of the insects on your lawn and garden are not harmful.
- **Read Labels!** Use only as directed. In their zeal to control the problem, many gardeners use pesticides at over 20 times the rate that farmers do.

5 • Pesticide Disposal

- Household toxics - such as pesticides, cleansers, and motor oil, can pollute the ocean and poison groundwater if disposed of in storm drains or gutters.
- Rinse empty pesticide containers and use rinse water as you would the product. Empty rinsed containers may be recycled depending on their type of may be thrown in the trash.
- City of Torrance residents can dispose of unused household toxics at Hazardous Waste Round Ups. Call 1-888-CleanLA or log onto www.888CleanLA.com for more info.

Dumping toxics into the street, gutter or storm drain is illegal!



SPILL RESPONSE / HAZARDOUS DISCHARGES

City of Torrance Fire Department
Hazardous Materials Division
Dispatch (310) 781-7042

TO CONNECT TO THE STORM DRAIN

It is illegal to connect to the storm drain without a permit. To obtain a storm drain connection permit, contact the City of Torrance Community Development Department at (310) 618-5898
Mon-Thurs 8am-5pm

TO CONNECT TO THE COUNTY SEWER

Los Angeles County Sanitation District
(562) 699-7411 Ext. 2727

RECYCLING AND HAZARDOUS WASTE INFORMATION

Los Angeles County Dept. of Public Works,
Recycling & Household Hazardous Waste Disposal
1-888-CleanLA (1-888-253-2652) or log onto
www.888CleanLA.com

For more information on recycling and waste management, visit: www.RecycleTorrance.org

TO REPORT ILLEGAL DUMPING

Illegal dumping of trash, paint products, motor oil and other chemicals into storm drains is against the law!

To report illegal discharges or dumping to the storm drain system anywhere in Los Angeles County at any time, call:
1-888-CleanLA (1-888-253-2652)

TO REPORT A CLOGGED STORM DRAIN OR INLET

City of Torrance
Public Works Department
Mon-Thurs 7am-5pm
(310) 781-6900

To report a clogged storm drain inlet or catch basin anywhere in Los Angeles County at anytime, call:
Los Angeles County Dept. of Public Works
1-800-675-HELP or (626) 458-4357

This brochure is one of a series of brochures describing storm drain protection measures.

Other brochures include:

AUTOMOTIVE MAINTENANCE & CAR CARE

FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY

FRESH CONCRETE & MORTAR APPLICATION

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

HEAVY EQUIPMENT & EARTHMOVING
ACTIVITIES

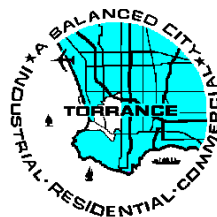
HOME REPAIR & REMODELING

PAINTING

SPA & SWIMMING POOL OWNERS

ROADWORK & PAVING

For more information about storm drain protection or additional brochures, call the



CITY OF

TORRANCE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT
(310) 618-5990

www.888CleanLA.com

The City of Torrance gratefully acknowledges the
City of Los Angeles
for
concept
and



Printed on recycled paper.

Stormwater Pollution Prevention

Landscaping Gardening & Pest Control



Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Safe Environmental Habits and
Procedures for:

Gardeners

Homeowners

Landscapers